

WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

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1. An information providing apparatus for acquiring data from a service providing apparatus capable of storing contents data and of transmitting the contents data in response to a request, and for providing said acquired contents data in a direct format, or in a converted format, said information providing comprising:

reproducing means for reproducing the contents data;

image data for relaying still picture data originated from the contents data reproduced by the reproducing means;

moving picture coding means for producing compressed moving picture data having a high image quality from the still picture image data by way of a stepwise image quality complementary type coding system corresponding to a coding system for complementing an image quality in a stepwise manner, and for transmitting the compressed moving picture data to the user terminal; and

control means for determining an area of still picture data coded into the compressed moving picture data in response to a manipulation made from the user terminal, and capable of notifying the determined area to the moving picture coding means.

2. An information providing apparatus as claimed in claim 1, wherein said control means is capable of producing a control signal used to change the reproducing state of the

reproducing means by receiving a manipulation of the user terminal,  
and is capable of transmitting the control signal to the  
reproducing means; and

the moving picture coding means produces compressed  
5 moving picture data from such still picture data, the content of  
which is sequentially changed by changing a setting condition of  
coding process operation, if necessary.

3. An information providing apparatus as claimed in  
10 claim 1, wherein the moving picture coding means produces audio  
data having a designated data format from audio data contained  
in the contents data, produces multiplexed AV data by multiplexing  
the compressed moving data with the audio data, and transmits the  
multiplexed AV data to the user terminal.

15 4. An information providing apparatus for providing  
data to a user terminal in response to a request, comprising:  
storing means for storing contents data;  
reproducing means for reproducing the contents data;  
20 image data for relaying still picture data originated  
from the contents data reproduced by the reproducing means;  
moving picture coding means for producing compressed  
moving picture data having a high image quality from the still  
picture image data by way of a stepwise image quality complementary  
25 type coding system corresponding to a coding system for

complementing an image quality in a stepwise manner, and for transmitting the compressed moving picture data to the user terminal; and

control means for determining an area of still picture data coded into the compressed moving picture data in response to a manipulation made from the user terminal, and capable of notifying the determined area to the moving picture coding means.

5. An information providing apparatus as claimed in claim 4, wherein said control means is capable of producing a control signal used to change the reproducing state of the reproducing means by receiving a manipulation of the user terminal, and is capable of transmitting the control signal to the reproducing means; and

the moving picture coding means produces compressed moving picture data from such still picture data, the content of which is sequentially changed by changing a setting condition of coding process operation, if necessary.

6. An information providing apparatus as claimed in claim 4, wherein the moving picture coding means produces audio data having a designated data format from audio data contained in the contents data, produces multiplexed AV data by multiplexing the compressed moving data with the audio data, and transmits the multiplexed AV data to the user terminal.